II besides in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and what steps Government propose to take to strengthen the tourist infrastructure at such centres-

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) Based on the recommendations of the 1st Task Force, which had a representative from Archaeological Survey of India, a project to develop places of Buddhist importance in the States of U.P. and Bihar is being executed with the assistance of Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan.

(b) Under this project wayside facilities have been sanctioned at Doherighat and Gazipur in U.P. and a wayside facility at Hiswa in Bihar is proposed.

(c) Reimbursement claims amounting to Rs. 14.32 crores have been sent to Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan which are under consideration.

(d) The Second Task Force identified 53 Buddhist Centres in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K., Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu for phased development. Central Department of Tourism would consider extending assistance to the concerned State Governments. On receipt of specific proposals and dependent upon their merits, availability of funds and *inter-se* priority.

Incentives for development of Equipments based on Solar Energy

995. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that over 100 million families are presently using firewood in rural households, which represents a major share of energy used in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what incentives Government are giving for R & D efforts for development of equipments based on solar energy and also what fiscal incentives are being offered for commercial production of such equipment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) It is estimated that around 150 million households in rural areas will be using fire wood in the year 2000 for cooking and heating applications.

(c) R and D efforts for development of equipments based on solar energy are being carried out by various institutes, universities, laboratories etc. Financial support is provided by the Government for taking up R & D activities.

Fiscal incentives, like 100 per cent rate of depreciation under the Income Tax Act, exemption from Industrial Licensing, relief in Customs duty, exemption from Central excise are available to the manufacturers for commercial production of solar equipments. Sales Tax exemption reduction has also been allowed on solar energy equipments devices by some of the manufacturers.

Some of the solar thermal equipments|devices are provided to the consumers under cost sharing (subsidy) scheme by the Government.

Appointment of Inquiry Commission on working of Coal India Limited

996. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether several associations, organisations and individuals have urged the Central Government to

appoint an inquiry commission to go into the working to Coal India Limited specifically on the question of price rise;

(b) if so, what are the details of the representations received;

(c) whether Government have since examined various aspects of the representations; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDAR): (a) to (d) Some associations|individuals have urged the Central Government not to allow an increase in coal prices as it would have adverse effect on country's economy. A few of them have also suggested appointment of an Enquiry Commission to investigate into the working of Coal India Limited.

The price of coal produced by Coal India Ltd. was last increased in January, 1989 based on the June, 1988 indices. Since then the cost of production of coal has gone up due to increase in the cost of various inputs. The Coal India Ltd. has requested the Central Government to update the price strictly in accordance with the recommendations of Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices (BICP).

At present there is no proposal to set up a Commission of Enquiry as suggested. However, Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices (BICP) has undertaken a comprehensive study of the coal industry with a view to recommend suitable prices and other policy measures for this industry.

Break down of Gas Turbines of D.E.S.U.

997. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 4 or 5 new gas turbines of D.E.S.U. have broken down leading to present power crisis in the capital and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) what corrective steps have been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) Out of the six Gas Turbines of the Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking, two units have been out of order for some time due to technical faults. DESU has already initiated action for the repairs and recommissioning of these units at the earliest. The outage of the two Gas Turbine Units has not led to any power crisis in the capital.

Oil and Gas exploration contracts

998. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the exploration contracts for oil and gas signed by Government during the current year; and

(b) what is the number of contracts likely to be signed in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) Government has not signed any exploration contract for oil and gas during the current year.

Theft of power in Delhi

999. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI SOM PAL:
SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY